

COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT

FINAL PROGRESS REPORT

Cooperative Agreement Number: *X8-83698001*

Reporting Period: *August 1, 2021 to July 31, 2021 (Year 4, Final)*

Date Submitted: *October 1, 2021*

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Project Narrative Summary

Under EPA cooperative agreement, X8-83698001, Extension Foundation (EF) created and implemented an online application process for Pesticide Safety Education Program Coordinators (PSEP) for the Pesticide Safety Education Funds Management Program (PSEFMP) funding opportunity for a fourth year. Utilizing Survey Monkey Apply, an online application was created for the 2021 funding year, in order for PSEP coordinators to submit applications, provide review of those applications by the advisory committee, and award applications. Additionally this site provides post award services including submission of semi-annual progress reports.

Applicants completed a six (6) section application form:

1. Institutional and Contact Information
 - a. Land Grant University affiliation
 - b. PSEP Coordinator Contact Information
 - c. Institutional Information
2. Subaward Work
 - a. Goals
 - b. Evaluation
 - c. Licensed Work Product
 - i. Deliverable
 - ii. PSEP Collaboration Potential
3. Budget
 - a. Proposed Budget
 - b. Budget Justifications
4. Office of Sponsored Programs
 - a. Office of Sponsored Programs Contact Information
 - b. Audit Information
5. Commitments
 - a. Progress Reports
 - b. Trainings
 - c. Personal Development Opportunities
6. Subaward Agreement

The announcement of this funding opportunity was provided on September 1, 2020 via email to all PSEP coordinators, and Extension directors notifying of the opportunity and outlining the online application process. A funding formula was established utilizing ninety five (95) percent (%) of the funds for year four and any rollover of un-awarded funds from year three to establish a base amount for each state or territory. Each PSEP was eligible to apply for a base amount of \$16,625.00. The remaining five (5) percent was divided proportionally based on the number of certified applicators per state or territory. The number of certified applicators in a state or territory was based on the most recent figures of certified applicators supplied by the EPA.

The online system launched on September 14, 2020 at 8 am EST to receive applications.

The application system closed on November 13, 2020, at 8pm EST. PSEP coordinators and their institutions received timely announcements regarding the funding opportunity and 91% (52/57) applied for sub-awards. This is an increase of 3% from the applications received for the 2021 funding. With this percentage increase, Year 4 has been our most successful application funding year to date for the PSEFMP.

Fifty two (52) applications were submitted, therefore fifty two (52) sub-award applications were funded making this year our most successful year of funding yet. The states that did not receive funding for the 2021 cycle are listed below:

- South Dakota
- Indiana
- Washington D.C.
- Micronesia
- Oregon

One hundred (100) percent (%) of sub-award funds were distributed to eligible PSEPs within 30 days of the advisory committee decision of approval. One hundred (100) percent (%) of sub-recipients understand program expectations and compliance requirements. One hundred (100) percent (%) of sub-recipients' compliance/subaward agreements have been finalized.

1. PROJECT PROGRESS

Progress reported in this section will clearly identify only those activities performed during the reporting period that were undertaken with EPA funds, and will relate EPA-funded activities to the objectives and milestones agreed upon in the grant work-plan.

1.1 Status of Activities During the Reporting Period

Completed tasks:

1. EF held online and face to face meetings among grant partners:
 - a. One hour meetings occurred the first Thursday of every month with the National Pesticide Safety Education Center (NPSEC) to discuss the layout of the application process, application content and proposed acceptable deliverables.
2. Sub-recipient eligibility established to limit funding to land-grant university extension programs in all 50 states, U.S. territories, Commonwealths and the District of Columbia

3. Base amount of funding was established based on two (2) year average, 2017 - 2019, of the number of applicators certified in the applicants jurisdiction:
 - a. Ninety five (95) percent (%) of the funds for year two and rollover of un-awarded funds from year one were taken to provide a base amount to all PSEP coordinators in the amount of \$16,625.00. The remaining five (5) percentage (%) of the funds were then divided proportionally based on the percentage of the number of certified applicators in each state or territory. The number of certified applicators in a state or territory was based on the most recent figures of certified applicators as supplied by the EPA.
4. EF maintained the online application and reporting system.
 - a. Contracted with Survey Monkey Apply to continue to be the host site for the online application process.
 - b. Online progress report template was created. Sub-awardees submitted these reports online through Survey Monkey Apply at six months and twelve months. Dates of submission for the progress reports were July 31, 2021 and January 31, 2022.
5. EF generated and announced the funding opportunity and application process.
 - a. Announcement was made to all PSEP Coordinators on September 1, 2020 for the 2021 funds.
 - b. Announcements were sent via email to all PSEP coordinators, and Extension directors.
 - c. Announcements were posted on eXtension Foundation and NPSEC websites.
6. EF offered online trainings for application site (Survey Monkey Apply)
 - a. September 14 at 11 am EST and 3 pm EST
7. Sub-recipients created applications using a simplified online process (Survey Monkey Apply)
 - a. The application system opened on September 14, 2020 at 8 am EST.
8. Subrecipients complied with all reporting requirements. They are explained online and help is offered for those with questions.
9. One hundred (100) percent (%) of subrecipients understand program expectations and compliance requirements.
10. A fast and efficient sub-recipient award process was utilized to receive and approve applications. This process is outlined below:
 - a. Applications were submitted via the online application system Survey Monkey Apply complete with an institutionally signed sub-award agreement
 - b. Advisory Committee reviewed applications for compliance and fundability
 - c. If additional information was needed from the applicant, the Project Manager emailed the applicant advising of the additional information requested and reopened the application in the application site.
 - d. If the application was approved, the application was then moved to "Awarded" status in the Survey Monkey Apply site.

- e. Applicants were notified via email that their application had been approved. The email included the official award package of official award letter, application and fully executed sub-award agreement.
11. EF tracked the movement of each step of the distribution process in multiple spreadsheets based on relevant information. These spreadsheets are posted in Google docs and only the administration has access. The sheets were and are used by the Project Manager, Tira Adelman to determine if all time frames are being met. Problems, concerns and issues delaying the process for each sub-recipient are noted and resolutions are determined and implemented to increase the efficiency of the process in subsequent years. The spreadsheets utilized are the following:
- a. Sub-award Tracking - this sheet was specifically designed for tracking the movement of the sub-awards from application submission until the award ends after the one year sub-award term. Categories in this sheet include: status; project number (SA-2021-xx); PSEP coordinator name; state/territory; institution; project title; topic area; subtopic area; deliverable; amount available (per funding formula); amount requested; date funds disbursed; PSEP coordinator email; and PSEP phone number.
 - b. Administrative and Fundability Review Checklist PSEFMP Applications - this sheet was specifically designed for use during the Advisory Committee's review of applications for compliance and fundability. Categories in this sheet include: all 50 states, the territories and the District of Columbia; criteria of the committee's review, for example "Does the deliverable topic and subtopic area match the type of product selected for sharing?"; notes on committee's discussion and decisions on recommendation to approve, and disapprove or hold the application.
 - c. Program Collaboration - this sheet was specifically designed for use by the Program Review Subcommittee in reviewing sub-awards for the purpose of potential collaboration among PSEPs. Categories in this sheet include: project number; PSEP coordinator name; state/territory; region; institution; project title; topic area; subtopic area; deliverable; description of deliverable; and indicated willingness to work with other PSEPs. Additionally this sheet includes pivot tables in order to organize the data into groups for ease of use and understanding of the different projects. The pivot tables are sorted by topic area; deliverable; subtopic area and topic area by region.
12. EF offered a training session on the reporting system (Survey Monkey Apply) on December 1, 2020 at 3:00 pm EST
13. The Compliance Review Committee conducted two rounds of reviews prior to the deadline of November 11, 2020 and December 9, 2020 in order to review any applications that had already been received.
14. Funding announcements were made to sub-recipients in one group on December 14, 2020. Announcements were sent via email advising that their application had been approved for funding and the requirements set forth by accepting this funding, i.e. progress reporting every six months. The email included an attachment of the official award letter, application package and fully executed sub-award agreement.

15. PSEPs received timely announcements regarding the funding opportunity and 91% applied for sub-awards. Extension Foundation's original goal was to have 90% of the PSEPs apply for sub-awards, so we have finally surpassed our goal. We had two new states apply this year that have never participated in previous funding years:

- a. Wisconsin
- b. Michigan

Five states, the District of Columbia and one territory either started but did not complete an application or did not start applications. For those that did not submit an application an email was sent requesting the reason as to why. If available I have included the reasons that were indicated as to why an application was not submitted.

- c. Indiana - N/A
- d. Michigan - N/A
- e. Wisconsin - N/A
- f. South Dakota - N/A
- g. Oregon - PSEP coordinator stated that she simply did not have time with internal institutional turnover and budgeting factors.
- h. District of Columbia - N/A
- i. Micronesia - N/A

16. One hundred (100) percent (%) of sub-awards were distributed to eligible PSEPs within 30 days of the advisory committee decision.

17. Sub-recipients complied with all reporting requirements. These requirements were explained online in the application site and help was and is available to those with questions. Sub-recipients agreed to comply with all reporting requirements within the application. Section 7 of the application was dedicated to commitments of the sub-recipients. In this section sub-recipients agreed to submit progress reports every six (6) months, attend a minimum of one (1) hour long training webinars as part of this program for reporting system training and professional development, and to attend one professional development opportunity, for example attend the EPA Pesticide Applicator Certification Training (PACT) meeting.

18. One hundred (100) percent (%) of sub-recipients understand program expectations and compliance requirements.

19. Ninety nine (99) percent (%) of PSEPs met application requirements and deadlines. Out of the fifty two (52) applications received, one (1) missed the submission deadline and had to request an extension. The state that requested extension are as follows:

- a. Montana

10. One hundred (100) percent (%) of sub-recipients' compliance/sub-award agreements have been finalized. Sub-recipients were required to submit a signed partially executed agreement before submission of the applications. This was to ensure agreement with compliance requirements and eXtension Foundations' terms and conditions in exchange for receiving these funds.

11. A link to a brief survey monkey was sent to sub-recipients to determine their satisfaction with the process. Two surveys were sent, one immediately after submission of

application, with receipt of application acknowledgement. The second was sent after the last group of applications were approved for funding.

- b. The first survey asked applicants to rate their experience using a five star scale in which 1 star being their experience was terrible and 5 being their experience was excellent. We received no responses to this survey.
- c. The second survey was provided via email to sub-awardees on January 6, 2021. This survey was designed to evaluate and solicit feedback for the entire application process and was designed to take no longer than two (2) minutes to complete. Sixteen (16) sub-awardees responded to the survey. The questions and results of the survey are included below:
 1. Overall, how well does the application site meet your needs?
 - a. Extremely well - 68.75%
 - b. Very well - 31.25%
 - c. Somewhat well - 0.00%
 - d. Not so well - 0.0%
 - e. Not at all well - 0.0%
 2. How easy was it to find what you were looking for on the application site?
 - a. Extremely easy - 56.25%
 - b. Very easy - 25.00%
 - c. Somewhat easy - 18.75%
 - d. Not so easy - 0.0%
 - e. Not at all easy - 0.0%
 3. Did it take you more or less time than you expected to complete an application?
 - a. A lot less time - 25.00%
 - b. A little less time - 12.50%
 - c. About what I expected - 56.25%
 - d. A little more time - 6.25%
 - e. A lot more time - 0.0%
 4. What process and/or section created the most delay in submitting your application.
 - a. Free form option
 - i. Budget site
 - ii. Most of the hang-up is between sponsored programs and myself. They are very particular in what should be specified in the contract and require that I submit the grant through our in-house system in addition to SM Apply.
 - iii. The approval and signatures from OSP. You and I have no control over that.
 - iv. N/A

- v. My University grants and contract system requires several weeks to process grants. This year was worse because of furloughs and a hiring freeze.
 - vi. Getting Sponsored Programs to do their part! (as usual!!!)
 - vii. I had some trouble with collaborators, specifically OSP. They are used to checking over the application and then submitting it themselves, but this application has to be checked by them and then submitted by the PSEP Coordinators. This extra step led to some confusion and delay.
 - viii. Budget (this was listed 5 times)
 - ix. OSPA approval.
 - x. Working its way through our system.
 - xi. OSP approval
 - xii. Budget section, but still simple enough.
5. How easy is it to understand the information on the application site?
- a. Extremely easy - 43.75%
 - b. Very easy - 37.50%
 - c. Somewhat easy - 18.75%
 - d. Not so easy - 0.0%
 - e. Not at all easy - 0.0%
6. How easy was it to understand the terms of the subaward agreement?
- a. Extremely easy - 18.75%
 - b. Very easy - 25.00%
 - c. Somewhat easy - 50.00%
 - d. Not so easy - 6.25%
 - e. Not easy at all - 0.0%
7. Did the application site trainings held prior to the launch of the application site help you in navigating the site?
- a. A great deal - 50.00%
 - b. A lot - 37.50%
 - c. A moderate amount - 6.25%
 - d. A little - 6.25%
 - e. Not at all - 0.0%
 - f. I didn't attend any of the training sessions - 0.0%
8. How would you rate your experience using the online application site? (star rating avg. rating 4.6)
- a. Terrible - 0.0%
 - b. Just okay - 0.0%
 - c. Neutral - 6.25%

- d. Good - 25.00%
 - e. Excellent - 68.75%
9. Do you have any other comments or suggestions about how we can improve the application site?
- a. Free form option
 - i. Non
 - ii. Tira does an excellent job communicating the process. She is also accessible and responsive!
 - iii. Thanks to Tira. You are great to work with. Very responsive, pleasant and helpful!
 - iv. No improvements needed. The site is great and the training Tira provides is always very helpful. Thank you for creating this format for submitting proposals and reporting on the progress of our projects.
 - v. No.
 - vi. Nope
 - vii. NA
 - viii. The process was very easy and our sponsored programs contact stated that the process was one of the easiest and most streamlined she has worked with.
 - ix. Great job
 - x. Everything is made easy on eXtension's side; thank you. I have no complaints or ideas on how to improve the process further.
 - xi. OK
 - xii. I would be very helpful if the prior year's applications and midterm and annual reports would rename accessible on the Survey Monkey site.
Thank you.
12. Due to the excessive number of No Cost Extension requests we received for the 2018 funds, this option was not offered to sub-awardees for the 2020 funding cycle. Sub-awardees were again encouraged to spend down all monies awarded within the 2020 funding cycle and that all unused funds must be returned at the end of the sub-award agreement, December 31, 2020.
13. EF offered online trainings for final progress report submission on Survey Monkey Apply
- a. December 1 at 3 pm EST
 - b. January 15 at 3 pm EST
14. Sub-recipients must comply with all reporting requirements. They are explained online and help is offered for those with questions.
- a. The deadline for submission of the Final Progress Report and required shareable deliverable was January 31, 2021.

- b. Final progress reports tracked the progress of the project/program, if the required deliverable was submitted, the final budget numbers and if collaboration between programs occurred.
 - c. Actual Collaboration occurred between twenty six (26) programs.
 - i. Colorado, Wyoming and Kansas
 - ii. Florida and PERC
 - iii. Hawaii, Guam, American Samoa and Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas
 - iv. Kansas and Missouri
 - v. North Dakota and Kentucky
 - vi. North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota
 - vii. Kansas and Colorado
 - viii. North Dakota and Minnesota
 - ix. Texas, Oklahoma, Arizona and New Mexico
 - x. Utah, Nebraska, Minnesota, Colorado, NPSEC, NC Agromedicine, Iowa and Wisconsin
 - xi. Washington and Idaho
 - d. In the 2021 application, thirty (30) or sixty (60) percent (%) of programs indicated they were willing to collaborate with another program. If they did not indicate they were willing to collaborate eX will reach out to them after the Program Review Committee meets to make them aware of identified potential collaborations to see if they are willing to collaborate.
 - e. Going forward further efforts will be taken in order to track these collaborations and the outcome(s). On the application for 2021 the question was specifically asked, if a coordinator was willing to collaborate and if so, if they had a particular program in mind. By having this as a starting point in the application will better allow us to track, encourage and support these collaborations. Example of the items we would like to track and questions to be answered by these collaborations
 - i. What did they do (activity)?
 - ii. Output of that activity?
 - iii. Selected outcome(s):
 - 1. Improved quality
 - 2. Increased reach to new audiences with additional languages
 - 3. Increased enrollments by putting information online
 - 4. Saved time by adopting material from others
 - 5. Reduced duplication of effort
20. Formal requests for all unused funds have been sent to institutions with remaining balances to receive funds via physical check. Total amount of unused funds as of this report is \$13,474.39
- a. Alaska - \$407.66
 - b. Arizona - \$427.91
 - c. Florida - \$93.03

- d. Idaho - \$10.46
 - e. Maine - \$13.54
 - f. Mississippi - \$79.08
 - g. Nebraska - \$8.66
 - h. Nevada - \$71.37
 - i. New Jersey - \$2.00
 - j. New Mexico - \$3,139.63
 - k. Ohio - \$7,939.27
 - l. Texas - \$143.15
 - m. Vermont - \$83.31
 - n. Virginia - \$48.32
 - o. Puerto Rico - \$1,007.00
21. EF offered training sessions on submitting 6-month progress reports in Survey Monkey
Apply on **May 24, 2021** at 3 pm eastern and **Jul 13, 2021** at 2 pm eastern.
22. Sub-recipients submitted 6-month progress reports on July 31, 2021.
23. During the week of July 19th, the Project Manager attended the biannual Pesticide Applicator Certification and Training (PACT) conference. During this time the Project Manager was able to meet face-to-face with PSEP coordinators to talk about their projects, answer questions and make plans for the next six months of the grant and into year 5.

<u>Objective 1:</u> Improving the Application, Subaward Disbursement, Monitoring, and Reporting Processes	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
EF held online and face to face meetings among partners, subrecipients and others to share content	X	X	X	X
Base amount of funding has been established based on three (3) year average, 2013 - 2015, of the number of applicators certified in the applicants jurisdiction	X	X	X	X
EF generated and announced online application and process	X	X	X	X
EF developed and implemented online reporting system	X	X	X	X
EF offers online trainings	X	X	X	X
EF and partners announce subawards	X	X	X	X
Subrecipients sign subaward agreements	X	X	X	X
Subrecipients receive subawards	X	X	X	X

EF creates and announces online support network	X	X		
EF offers online trainings on reporting system	X	X	X	X
EF generates quarterly EPA report	X	X	X	X
EF provides strategic partners with mid-term report	X	X		X
EF surveys subrecipients to determine the percentage (%) that understand subaward agreement	X	X	X	X
Subrecipients submit six (6) month reports	X	X	X	X
EF meets with strategic partners to review progress and make adjustments	X	X	X	X
EF provides strategic partners with annual report	X	X	X	X
Subrecipient eligibility will be limited to land-grant university extension programs in all 50 states, the U.S. territories and the District of Columbia	X	X	X	X
Subrecipients will create applications for funding using a simplified online process.	X	X	X	X
Subrecipients must agree to comply with all reporting requirements. These are explained online and help is offered for those with questions.	X	X	X	X
<u>Objective 2:</u> <u>Professional PSEP education and training delivered nationally</u>				
Strategic partners review educational materials, conduct online workshops and deliver updates	X	X	X	X
Strategic partners review subrecipients annual reports, applicator evaluations, EPA and industry/research updates to guide annual workshops	X	X	X	X
Strategic partners will provide EF a professional development progress report detailing education successes, needs and a continuous improvement plan	X	X	X	X
Each subrecipient generated a minimum of one education deliverable and shared it with the PSEP network	X	X	X	X

Objective 3:

Improving the PSEFMP by creating and implementing a system for continuous program and administrative improvement

EF creates advisory committee	X	X	X	X
Advisory committee reviews strategic partners input and actions to make recommendations	X	X	X	X
Advisory committee contributes input for EPA final report	X	X	X	X
Feedback and review of biannual reporting will be reviewed and appropriate actions/solutions identified by strategic partners and the advisory committee will be executed.	X	X	X	X
Annually, EF will organize and conduct trainings for subrecipients that include feedback information addressing administrative efficiency, and education affectedness.	X	X	X	X
Biannually, EF's advisory committee will make recommendations to improve efficiency and acknowledge operations that are working successfully.	X	X	X	X

Anticipated tasks for completion in Year 5 Quarter 1:

1. EF announces funding for Year 5
2. EF creates the online application in Survey Monkey Apply for Year 5 funding.
3. EF holds training sessions on submitting applications to the online system.

1.2 Modifications to the Work-plan and Schedule

1.2.1 Include a description of any modifications to the work-plan that were approved during the reporting period. Also mentioned in this section modifications to the work-plan that will be proposed in the next reporting period. **If none, please state so.**

There were no modifications to the work-plan and there are none proposed for the next reporting period.

Please note that mentioning a proposed modification or item requiring approval in the quarterly progress report does not satisfy the requirement for submitting a request to EPA. Modifications requiring formal approval include changes to the budget and the approved scope of work. Other items requiring approval, such as selection of grant sites, are identified under the terms and conditions of the cooperative agreement.

1.2.2 Please also explain in this section any delays or other problems (if any) encountered during this reporting period for each activity, and describe the corrective measures that are planned. Also mention what kind of assistance (such as training or technical support) is needed to address these problems in the future.

If none, please state so.

1.2.3 Submit a revised schedule if changes have occurred. **If none, please state so.**

A revised schedule is not needed at this time.

2. PROJECT FUNDS EXPENDED

Table 1: Costs incurred by task and object class for the year.

Note: Not all drawdowns have occurred yet. Costs are not final. One task assumed.

	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	Total
Personnel	\$90,482.64				
Fringe Benefits	\$23,463.26				
Travel	\$298.46				
Supplies	\$0.00				
Other:	\$845,000.00				
Subawards	\$63,556.51				
Contractual:					
Clerical	\$1,015.00				
Accounting	\$9,074.96				
Legal	\$0.00				

Total Direct	\$1,032,890.83				
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Table 2: Summary of costs incurred for project year.

Note: Not all drawdowns have occurred yet. Costs are not final. One task assumed.

The current approved budget for the project year has been adjusted to include both the incremental direct costs for project year 4 totaling \$988,320 and \$185,454 in cumulative carry-forward, a portion of which has been used to augment this year's subaward budget. This carry-forward amount is shown on a separate line below.

Object Class	Current Approved Budget (yr 4)	Costs Incurred This Year	Cumulative Costs (yr 4)	Total Remaining (yr 4)
Personnel	\$88,780.00	\$90,482.64	\$90,482.64	-\$1,702.64
Fringe Benefits	\$28,030.00	\$23,463.26	\$23,463.26	\$4,566.74
Travel	\$5,100.00	\$298.46	\$298.46	\$4,801.54
Supplies	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other:	\$845,000.00	\$845,000.00	\$845,000.00	\$0.00
Subawards				
Unawarded C/F	\$151,950.00	\$63,556.51	\$63,556.51	\$88,393.49
Contractual:				
Clerical	\$7,690.00	\$1,015.00	\$1,015.00	\$6,675.00
Accounting	\$6,000.00	\$9,074.96	\$9,074.96	-\$3,074.96
Legal	\$7,720.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$7,720.00
Total Direct	\$1,140,270.00	\$1,032,890.83	\$1,032,890.83	\$107,379.17

3. BUDGET AND OVERALL PROJECT STATUS

Include an estimate of the time and funds needed to complete the activities identified in the approved work-plan, comparing that estimate with the time and funds remaining, and provide an explanation for any changes. If overall, the project is expected to be on target, please state so. For example, individual tasks may be behind schedule, but overall, is the project expected to be completed on time and within budget?

3.1 Subaward Status

3.2 Project Year Budget Outlook

3.3 Overall Project Budget Outlook

With the incorporation of unawarded funds into each following year, and the steady accumulation of prime-awardee costs over the life of the award, we remain hopeful that we will spend almost all funds within the anticipated five-year life of the award. At the same time, we already know that we will need a no-cost extension because the subaward cycle runs later than our prime-award calendar. However, based on the work patterns we see four years into this project, we expect that both this extension and the close-out cycle will be very manageable.